

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-23. (canceled)

24. (new) An isolated nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a transcript or cDNA sequence that encodes a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:2;
- (b) SEQ ID NO:1;
- (c) nucleotides 12-1931 of SEQ ID NO:1; and
- (d) a nucleotide sequence that is completely complementary to the nucleotide sequence of (a), (b), or (c).

25. (new) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a serine/threonine kinase, wherein the nucleotide sequence of said nucleic acid molecule consists of a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a nucleotide sequence that encodes a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO:2;
- (b) a nucleotide sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO:1;
- (c) a nucleotide sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to nucleotides 12-1931 of SEQ ID NO:1; and
- (d) a nucleotide sequence that is completely complementary to the nucleotide sequence of (a), (b), or (c).

26. (new) An isolated nucleic acid molecule encoding a serine/threonine kinase, wherein the nucleotide sequence of said nucleic acid molecule comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- (a) a transcript or cDNA sequence that encodes a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO:2;

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- (b) a nucleotide sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO:1;
- (c) a nucleotide sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to nucleotides 12-1931 of SEQ ID NO:1; and
- (d) a nucleotide sequence that is completely complementary to the nucleotide sequence of (a), (b), or (c).

27. (new) An isolated nucleic acid molecule having a nucleotide sequence comprising SEQ ID NO:1 or the complement thereof.

28. (new) An isolated nucleic acid molecule having a nucleotide sequence comprising nucleotides 12-1931 of SEQ ID NO:1 or the complement thereof.

29. (new) An isolated transcript or cDNA nucleic acid molecule comprising a nucleotide sequence that encodes a polypeptide comprising SEQ ID NO:2, or the complement of said nucleotide sequence.

30. (new) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 25, further comprising a heterologous nucleotide sequence.

31. (new) The isolated nucleic acid molecule of claim 30, wherein the heterologous nucleotide sequence encodes a heterologous amino acid sequence.

32. (new) A vector comprising the nucleic acid molecule of any one of claims 24-31.

33. (new) An isolated host cell containing the vector of claim 32.

34. (new) A process for producing a polypeptide comprising culturing the host cell of claim 33 under conditions sufficient for the production of said polypeptide, and recovering said polypeptide.

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35. (new) The vector of claim 32, wherein said vector is selected from the group consisting of a plasmid, a virus, and a bacteriophage.

36. (new) The vector of claim 32, wherein said nucleic acid molecule is inserted into said vector in proper orientation and correct reading frame such that a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence having at least 95% sequence identity to SEQ ID NO:2 is expressed by a cell transformed with said vector.

37. (new) The vector of claim 36, wherein said isolated nucleic acid molecule is operatively linked to a promoter sequence.